

LAWN CARE

FOR PESTICIDE APPLICATORS

Consumer Information Sheet



Anyone you hire to apply pesticides to your lawn is required by the Department of Food and Agriculture regulations to provide you with this information sheet in order to answer commonly asked questions about the pesticides used, and to give advice on safety measures for you and the environment.

PESTICIDE BUREAU
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
251 CAUSEWAY STREET
BOSTON, MA 02114
617-626-1781

Are applications of commercial lawn care pesticides safe?

All pesticides are poisons. However, the toxicity varies from one pesticide to another, and different people may be affected differently by the same exposure. Although there is usually no hazard, you should take steps to minimize your exposure to avoid potential problems.

Is it safer to maintain my own lawn?

Probably not. The pesticides that you could use on your lawn are the same ones that the professional uses. Do-it-yourself applications can be more hazardous because you may be exposed to these pesticides during your application. Although many people are able to use pesticides safely, the greatest amount of pesticide misuse is from homeowner use. There are additional hazards with improper storage of pesticides around the home. So, if you do decide to maintain your own lawn, seek professional advice and follow the pesticide label direction.

Can I minimize exposure to pesticide applications?

Yes. To reduce exposure and the potential of problems from pesticide applications, there are reasonable steps that can be taken. These include closing windows and removing all lawn furniture and toys from the yard. People and pets should not enter treated areas, nor stand downwind during and immediately after applications.

Can I be notified by the company prior to an application?

Yes, the person you hire must provide you with the opportunity to request to receive notice before each pesticide application. This notification would allow you time to prepare for the applications. You can also use this notification option to contact concerned neighbors.

Must the applicator put signs on my lawn?

Yes, the applicator is required to post a standardized sign(s) on pesticide treated lawns. The sign provides notice to you and your neighbors that a pesticide application was made to your lawn. This will allow you and other persons to avoid treated areas, if desired. Children should be told that signs mean that a pesticide application has recently taken place and that they should stay off.

How long should the sign(s) remain posted?

After the applicator leaves the property, it is up to you to determine how long to leave the sign(s) posted. The Massachusetts Pesticide Board recommends that the signs can be removed after 72 hours. The applicator must also leave you instructions for any other steps you should take after treatment. This information may help you decide when to take down your sign.

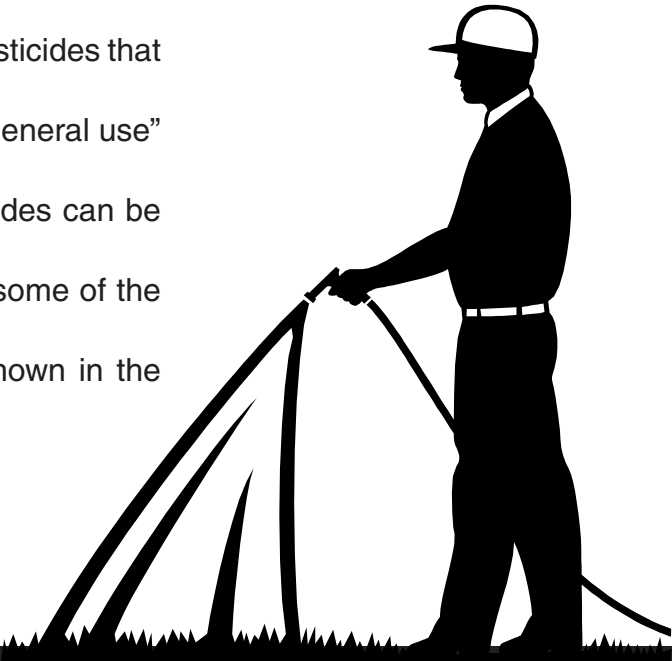
What information must be left with me after the application?

After each application, your applicator must leave information including:

- The name and Pesticide Applicator License number of the applicator
- The date and time of the application
- The trade name of the pesticide used
- Purpose of application
- What you should do after the application, if indicated on the label, and
- The words, "The sign should remain posted for a period of seventy two (72) hours unless otherwise recommended by the Department of Food and Agriculture."

What types of pesticides are commonly used?

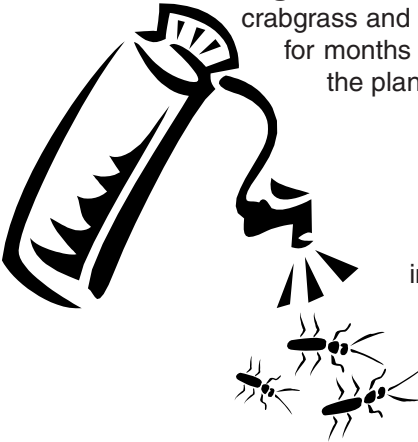
Lawn care companies primarily use pesticides that are registered for “general use”. The “general use” classification means that these pesticides can be purchased by anyone. A summary of some of the more commonly used pesticides is shown in the table below.



Trade Name	Common Name	Control Purpose	EPA Signal Word
Betasan	Bensulide	Crabgrass	Caution
DCPA	Dacthal	Crabgrass	Caution
Diazinon	Diazinon	Insect	Caution/Warning
Dursban	Chlorpyrifos	Insect	Warning
Halofenozide	Grubex	Insect	Caution
Pendimethalin	Pendimethalin	Crabgrass	Caution
TEAM	Trifluralin/benefin	Crabgrass	Caution
Trimec	2,4 - D; MCPP; Dicamba	Broadleaf Weed	Caution/Warning

*EPA has established toxicity ratings for concentrated pesticides with “Danger” being the most toxic, “Warning” being the next level of toxicity and “Caution” being the least toxic. Your applicator dilutes these pesticides according to label directions prior to use, reducing the toxicity of the concentrated pesticide.

Typically pesticides are used for the following purposes:



Crabgrass control occurs in the spring to control grassy weeds such as crabgrass and foxtails. These materials are not highly toxic but may remain for months in the environment either bonded to the soil or taken up by the plant.

Broadleaf weed control occurs primarily in the spring and fall during the most active growth of broadleaf weeds such as dandelion and clover. These materials are used on a limited basis during the summer. They generally remain in the soil for a few weeks.

Insect control occurs throughout the season when insects reach damaging levels. The material used is determined by the type of insect causing damage. These materials generally remain in the environment from a few days to weeks.

What if I have a question or a problem?

The Department of Food and Agriculture regulates the use of pesticides in Massachusetts. It is a violation of the law to use a pesticide inconsistent with the label directions. All commercial pesticide applicators must have a valid Pesticide Applicator License issued by the Department and you may wish to check for the license when they come to treat your lawn. If you suspect that your applicator is unlicensed or a misuse has occurred, please contact the Department of Food and Agriculture. If you have any other questions about the pesticides or the application you can contact:

- Your lawn care applicator or lawn care company;
- Pesticide Bureau (617-626-1700);
- EPA Pesticide Hotline (1-800-858-7378);
- Massachusetts Poison Information Center (617-232-2120);
- Department of Public Health/ Bureau of Environmental Health Assessment (617-624-5757).

If you have a contractual problem with a lawn care company, please contact the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office of Consumer Affairs (617-727-8400) or the Better Business Bureau (617-426-9000 and 413-734-3114).